The Rt Hon Richard Luce, MP,
Minister of State,
The Foreign & Commonwealth Office,
King Charles Street,
London SW1

20 May 1984

Dear Minister,

LONDON INTERFAITH GROUP ON LEBANON: the current danger to civilians

Last October a letter was addressed to the Foreign Secretary by some of the religious leaders supporting our group, including the Archbishops of Canterbury and Westminster, the Chief Rabbi and the President of the Islamic Council of Europe, drawing attention to the dangers facing defenceless civilians in southern Lebanon. The Foreign Secretary in his sympathetic reply shared our concern and indicated the directions in which Her Majesty's Government was pursuing the matter.

The Interfaith Group has in the meantime continued to monitor the situation and its executive officer has reported after a recent visit to Lebanon. Our current cause for concern is the effect upon the civilian population were the Government of Israel, before the forthcoming general election, to institute a complete or partial withdrawal. We feel that every effort should be made to ensure that effective protection is provided for those in southern Lebanon who may be put at risk in such an event and suggest that British concern should be made known to the governments involved.

We urge Her Majesty's Government to spare no effort in alerting those who may be able to mitigate the dangerous possibilities inherent in the present situation, including its allies, and to offer to the Lebanese Government any assistance within its powers.

Yours sincerely,

David Astor — Salem Azzam — William Frankel

Albert Hourani — George Assousa — Colin Legum

David McDowall

(Executives of the London Interfaith Group on Lebanon)